

*Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2023*

**Remarks at a State Dinner Honoring President Yoon Suk Yeol of South Korea**  
*April 26, 2023*

*President Biden.* Good evening, everyone. Please, have a seat.

Welcome to the White House. Jill and I are honored to have you here tonight to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the alliance between the Republic of Korea and the United States. And to President Yoon and Mrs. Kim, thank you for making the journey. We're delighted to have you here.

I believe this visit tonight has brought two nations even closer together. Yesterday evening, President Yoon and Mrs. Kim joined Jill and me at the Korean veterans war memorial. And we walked past the soldiers standing in steel—there were steel carvings and standing sentinel, and read the names of the fallen etched in the granite.

And, as many of you know, at the end of the memorial, there's an engraving that reads: "Our Nation honors her sons and daughters who answered the call to defend a country they never knew and a people they never met." It's a solemn reminder that our alliance was born out of not shared borders, but need—shared beliefs—a belief in democracy, liberty, security, and above all, a mutual belief in freedom.

A little over 70 years ago, Korean and American troops stood together for those beliefs, serving and sacrificing so that children in both our countries might have a better future. And it's a future we're living today.

The way the Korean people have transformed your country, Mr. President, through courage and hard work is one of the most prosperous—it's one of the most prosperous and respected nations in the world—is testament to the boundless possibilities our people can achieve when we do it together. And we know that our work is not yet done.

Today, it's our duty to answer the call, that call to make the world better for those who will come after us. You know, this visit is about reaffirming all that unites our two nations. It's about a commitment to bear one another's concerns and listen to each other's dreams that allows us to overcome every difficulty and with great determination.

That allows us to further—to move further and faster in space, cyber, technology, and in all the areas that matter most to our future. And that allows us to build, build a world that is worthy of our highest hopes and a world that we want for our own children and grandchildren.

We stand at an inflection point—many of you have heard me say before—where the decisions we make now are going to determine the course of our future for decades to come.

But I've never been more optimistic—and I mean that—I've never been more optimistic about our nations and what we can achieve together if we continue to work together as allies and as friends.

So please join me—and I'm looking for my—something to toast with here. *[Laughter]*

*[At this point, President Biden was handed a wine glass by a White House aide.]*

Thank you so much.

So please join me: To our partnership, to our people, to possibilities, and to the future the Republic of Korea and the United States that we'll create together. May we do it together for another 170 years.

*[President Biden offered a toast.]*

*President Yoon.* Mr. President, Dr. Biden, esteemed guests, and supporters of the R.O.K.-U.S. alliance, thank you for your warm welcome. Each of you at this magnificent and wonderful state dinner today is a reliable stakeholder and sponsor of the R.O.K.-U.S. alliance, which is one of the greatest in the history.

Mr. President, allow me to quote an Irish poet of yours. *[Laughter]* Seamus Heaney once wrote, "Behavior that's admired is the path to power among people everywhere." We admire sacrifices and actions of those who have propped up the R.O.K.-U.S. alliance for the past seven decades, have come together to forge a strong alliance in action, moving toward the future.

The seeds of the R.O.K.-U.S. alliance, sown in the ruins of the Korean war, have steadfastly grown over the past 70 years to form a rich and dense forest. The Republic of Korea's unprecedented economic growth and dynamic democracy have always been rooted in the R.O.K.-U.S. alliance.

Today President Biden and I, together, celebrated the 70th anniversary of the R.O.K.-U.S. alliance and had in-depth discussions on ways to further deepen our partnership in the future. We've reaffirmed that our trust in the alliance and our willingness to closely work together going forward will remain ironclad.

The alliance will last another seven decades and beyond. And it will open endless opportunities to the future generations of our two countries.

And going forward, the R.O.K.-U.S. alliance will take on more roles and responsibilities in order to tackle the complex crisis of our times. We will together embrace the future of the alliance, undergirded by our shared core values of freedom, democracy, the rule of law, and human rights.

The alliance will not only ensure the security and prosperity of both countries, but also contribute to the peace and security in the Indo-Pacific and of the world. And those of you joining us here today are the main drivers for building such an alliance.

And there's an old saying—and, Mr. President, this one is also Irish—*[laughter]*—that goes: "A good friend is like a four-leaf clover, hard to find and lucky to have." Today will be remembered as a historic day where the R.O.K.-U.S. alliance, like a four-leaf clover, spreads its new roots wide beyond the glory of the past 70 years.

Now I ask you to join me in the toast. To our alliance, confidently marching toward the future. To our ironclad alliance.

*[President Yoon offered a toast.]*

*President Biden.* Very good.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:25 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. President Yoon spoke in Korean, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 27.

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